

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A system for providing notification of an incoming email message to a subscriber, comprising:
 - an email server to which the incoming email message is sent and on which the incoming email is stored;
 - an email notification server to poll the email server to obtain the incoming email message;
 - a header extraction process to extract the header of the incoming email;
 - a text-to-speech converter to convert at least a portion of the header to speech as converted header information; and
 - a process to call a voicemail server corresponding to the subscriber and leave a voicemail message containing the converted header information as a voicemail message.
 2. The system recited in claim 1, wherein the voicemail server includes a process for notifying the subscriber of the voicemail message containing the converted header information.
 3. The system recited in claim 1, wherein the email notification server waits a predetermined amount of time prior to polling the email server to obtain the incoming email message.
 4. The system recited in claim 1, wherein the subscriber has more than one email account and wherein the email notification server polls each email account of the subscriber for the presence of new email messages.

5. The system recited in claim 4, wherein each email account has a different predetermined amount of time that the email notification server waits prior to polling the email account.

6. The system recited in claim 4, wherein each email account has a different predetermined amount of time that the email notification server waits prior to polling the email account and the email notification server skips polling the current email account and polls the next email account of the subscriber if the predetermined time corresponding to the current email account has not yet elapsed.

7. A method for notifying a subscriber of the presence of new email messages, comprising the steps of:

(a) polling an email account associated with the subscriber for the presence of new email messages;

(b) obtaining any new email messages;

(c) extracting at least a portion of header information of each new email as extracted header information; and

(d) notifying the subscriber of the new email using the extracted header information.

8. The method recited in claim 7, further comprising the step of converting the extracted header information to speech as converted header information.

9. The system recited in claim 6, further comprising the steps of:
contacting a voicemail system associated with the subscriber; and

leaving a voicemail message containing the converted header information for the subscriber.

10. The method recited in claim 9, further comprising the steps:
determining whether the subscriber has additional email accounts; and
repeating steps (a) - (d) for each email account if the subscriber has multiple email accounts.

11. The method recited in claim 8, further comprising the step of determining whether a predetermined time has elapsed prior to polling the subscriber's email account.

12. The method recited in claim 10, further comprising the step of determining whether a predetermined time has elapsed for each of the subscriber's email accounts where the subscriber has multiple email accounts.

13. A system for providing email notification to a plurality of subscribers comprising:

one or more email servers to which emails destined for any of the plurality of subscribers are sent and stored;

a database system containing an account record corresponding to each of the plurality of subscribers;

a notification server coupled to the database system, the notification server comprising:

a first process to poll the one or more email servers to determine if there are any new email messages for the plurality of subscribers; and

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a second process to notify each subscriber of any new email messages in accordance with an account record in the database corresponding to each subscriber.

14. The system recited in claim 13, wherein the notification server further comprises a third process to obtain each new email message from each of the one or more email servers, convert at least a portion of the email header associated with each new email message from text to speech as converted header information and to send the converted header information to a voice mailbox corresponding to the subscriber to whom the email was directed.

15. The system recited in claim 13, wherein prior to polling for a particular subscriber, the first process first determines if a predetermined time has been reached, and polling for the particular subscriber only if the predetermined time has been reached.

16. The system recited in claim 13, wherein one or more of the subscribers has a plurality of email accounts, and the first process polls each of the plurality of email accounts for each of the subscribers.

17. The system recited in claim 15, wherein prior to polling a particular email account for a particular subscriber, the first process first determines if a predetermined time has been reached, and polling the particular email account for the particular subscriber only if the predetermined time has been reached

18. The system recited in claim 13, wherein the account record contains email contact information for the subscriber corresponding to the account record.

19. The system recited in claim 13, wherein the email contact information includes a field describing a type of email system.

20. The system recited in claim 13, wherein the account record contains voicemail contact information for the subscriber corresponding to the account record.

21. The system recited in claim 13, wherein the account record contains pager contact information for the subscriber corresponding to the account record.

22. A server for providing email notification to a plurality of subscribers, comprising:

means for connecting a database to obtain an account record for a particular subscriber;

means for obtaining email account contact information for the particular subscriber from the account record for the particular subscriber;

means for polling the email account according to the email account contact information for the presence of new email; and

means for causing the particular subscriber to be notified of new email in the email account.

23. The server recited in claim 22, wherein the particular subscriber has multiple email accounts, further comprising:

means for polling each of the email accounts for the presence of new email; and

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26. The server recited in claim 22, wherein the means for causing the subscriber to be notified, comprises:

means for converting the obtained header information to speech as converted information; and

means for sending the converted information to a voicemail system associated with the particular subscriber in accordance with voicemail system contact information contained in the account record for the particular subscriber.

27. The server recited in claim 22, wherein the means for causing the subscriber to be notified comprises means for sending a page to the particular subscriber in accordance with pager contact information contained in the account record.

28. A method for providing email notification to a plurality of subscribers, comprising the steps of:

connecting a database to obtain an account record for a particular subscriber;

obtaining email account contact information for the particular subscriber
from the account record for the particular subscriber;

polling the email account according to the email account contact information
for the presence of new email; and

causing the particular subscriber to be notified of new email in the email
account.

29. The method recited in claim 22, wherein the particular subscriber has
multiple email accounts, further comprising the steps of:

polling each of the email accounts for the presence of new email; and

causing the particular subscriber to be notified of the presence of email in
any of the email accounts

30. The method recited in claim 23, wherein the multiple email accounts are on
multiple email servers.

31. The method recited in claim 22, wherein the step of polling the email account
comprises the step of polling the email account only after a predetermined time has
elapsed.

32. The method recited in claim 22, wherein the step of causing the subscriber to
be notified comprises the steps of:

obtaining at least a portion of the header information from each new email
for the particular subscriber;

converting the obtained header information to speech as converted
information; and

sending the converted information to a voicemail system associated with the particular subscriber in accordance with voicemail system contact information contained in the account record for the particular subscriber.

33. The method recited in claim 22, wherein the step of causing the subscriber to be notified comprises the step of sending a page to the particular subscriber in accordance with pager contact information contained in the account record.

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